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EWindsor voters OK purchase of police cruiser

By:Kory Loucks , Journal Inquirer

EAST WINDSOR - The majority of voters at Wednesday's annual town meeting supported purchasing a police cruiser, other items.

The police vehicle had been cut from the 2007-08 budget by the Board of Finance, during the referendum process.

About 45 residents approved items including:

- * Transferring \$70,000 from the contingency account to the account for legal fees.
- * Transferring \$23,470 from the unassigned capital and nonrecurring account to buy a police cruiser.
- * A resolution that the reports of the selectmen, town treasurer, and other town officers be accepted.
- * Authorizing the first selectman and town treasurer to borrow form time to time on behalf of and in the name of the town to m expenses until tax monies are available and to issue notes for same, and to determine the amount of such notes and to execute, s deliver same.

William A. Loos Jr. of 44 Melrose Road questioned the high legal fees, saying, "\$70,000 - it seems like we have lawyers runnir town."

He asked why insurance wasn't paying for lawyer's fees in connection with lawsuits.

First Selectwoman Denise E. Menard said the legal fees were for issues that occurred before she took office and that insurance : for "about half" of the outstanding lawsuits.

Menard agreed the legal expenses are high, saying: "I think you will see a change in legal fees going forward."

On the police cruiser, John Matthews of 39 Omelia Road made a motion for a paper ballot, which was seconded, but it was overwhelmingly voted down.

Donald Arcari, a former state trooper and Police Commission member, said: "These added appropriations should stop. We have every year."

Arcari is a member of the group Concerned Residents of East Windsor

Police Commission member Linda C. Sinsigallo rhetorically asked Arcari if he would feel safe if a police vehicle responding to emergency call broke down on its way to his house.

Finance Board member Marie E. DeSousa spoke in favor of a new cruiser. She said she went to the police headquarters and loo police vehicles with Chief Edward J. DeMarco Jr. and Capt. Roger V. Hart.

"Two line cars had rust on the outside of the vehicles," she said, and in her opinion, the new vehicle is necessary.

"To me, it is important," DeSousa said, adding that a new vehicle will be under warranty, reducing maintenance expenses.

"We have to give departments realistic budgets" from the start, Menard said.

Loos said: "The police budget keeps going up and up and up," observing that there is a request for two police vehicles in the 20 budget, Loos added: "I can't see why they can't wait for six months."

The motion to transfer money for the cruiser passed 42-2.

After the meeting DeMarco said police "want to be fiscally responsible." DeMarco said that historically the department would g new vehicles one year and two the following, in rotation, but it has gotten off that schedule because of cuts made by the Financi

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